

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

SURPRISING AND IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

As the most significant part of a letter is sometimes found in its postscript, so it is certain that the most important and interesting part of the speech made at New York on Tuesday last by the Hon. MONTGOMERY BLAIR, the late Postmaster General, was thrown into a parenthesis. That parenthesis contained the following piece of novel information:

Alluding to the fact that Mr. Vallandigham, after having opposed the nomination of Gen. McClellan, when he found himself outvoted, as is usual with the leader of the minority in such bodies, had moved that the nomination of Gen. McClellan should be made unanimous, Mr. BLAIR said:

"On his motion, every voice that had been raised to favor the nomination of McClellan was silenced, and the vote in his favor made unanimous. There was a potent spell in his voice that made a cessation of hostilities, 'a Convention of the States' of course as equals and independent, and a *quodammodo* chief of the Federal army—(one whom to the last I believed to be true to the cause in which his country is embarked, and, I may add, whom the President held to be patriotic, and I concurred with Gen. Grant to bring again into the field as his adjutant, if he turned his back on the proposals of the peace junta at Chicago)—to lead the last assault pressed by the Southern conspirators, countenanced by foreign Powers, against the institutions of the country."

From this extraordinary statement we learn that the President had arranged with Gen. Grant to bring Gen. McClellan again into the field as his "adjutant," provided the latter should decline the nomination of the Chicago Convention.

We wish the whole American people to ponder this statement and mark its significance. They will learn from this public announcement, made by a gentleman who, as a member of Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet, has shared his confidence in an unsurpassed degree, that both the President and Gen. Grant have full confidence in Gen. McClellan's military capacity, inasmuch that it had been "concerted" between Mr. Lincoln and the Lieutenant General that Gen. McClellan should be the "adjutant" of the latter. They will further learn from this extraordinary announcement that the President has no objections to Gen. McClellan save such as spring from the position of political rivalry into which the latter has been brought by the Chicago Convention. If Gen. McClellan had been willing to renounce the nomination conferred by that body, he would have been immediately thereupon a good enough General to be the "adjutant" of Gen. Grant in his difficult and responsible duties.

After this statement we shall hope to hear no reflections on the military capacity of Gen. McClellan from any friend of President Lincoln; for any such reflections can only imply that the President, in his satisfaction at getting quit of a dreaded political rival, would have been willing to put an incompetent officer in command of the lives of our soldiers and of the military fortunes of the Republic. When the statement is looked at in all the aspects it opens to the candid and patriotic mind, we greatly mistake the character of the American people if it does not produce a profound impression on the country. It is as significant as it is surprising. The friends of truth and of justice, equally with the friends of Gen. McClellan, ought to be grateful to Mr. Blair for the aid he has brought to them, by scattering at a single whiff of his breath the cloud of detraction with which, for political purposes, it has been sought to obscure the military reputation of Gen. McClellan.

We should not omit to add that we had several weeks ago an intimation of the proposition made by the President to Gen. McClellan under this head, and which Mr. Montgomery Blair has now published to the world and confirmed by the authority of his name. We had no doubt at the time of the authenticity of the statements which then came to our knowledge, but we were unwilling to give them currency until they had assumed a shape entirely trustworthy. The intimation to which we refer, confirmed as it was by some other sources of knowledge on the subject, appeared in a New York journal under date of last August 4th, having been communicated to that journal by its correspondent in this city. He wrote as follows:

"You have already advised your readers that Frank Blair, senior, had been in New York, but that nothing has transpired yet as to his mission. That secret I now have. It appears that his mission was for the purpose of seeing Gen. McClellan, and the report that he brings back is not just what he desired. Mr. Blair found, on his arrival in New York, that McClellan and wife were stopping with a friend on Throg's Neck, in Westchester county. He immediately set off to see him; but on his arrival there Mrs. McClellan, who informs him that the General was in the city that day. After ascertaining where he could get trace of him he retraces his steps, and succeeds in obtaining an interview with 'Little Mac' at two P. M. in some private office down town. After exchanging the usual compliments of the day Mr. Blair, senior, proceeds to business, and informs Gen. McClellan 'that his services are needed in the field, and that if he will address a note to either the President or himself stating that he has no political aspirations, and that he will not allow his name to be used at the Chicago Convention, he (the President) will give him (McClellan) an important command at once.' This may not have been the precise wording of Mr. Blair's statements in every particular; but it is the precise substance and purport of his statement. Gen. McClellan's reply was just such as an indignant man of his ability would give to such a proposition. As a matter of course he repudiated making any bargain and refused to write any such letter; but it is said that he intimated that he, as a military officer, was under the orders of the President, and if the latter ordered him to take the field he would have to resign."

"The result of all this is that Mr. Blair returned in a dejected and sad state of mind. He declares that it won't do to give McClellan a command unless he agrees not to allow his name to be used at the Chicago Convention. He is now in New York, taking every thing back that they have done against him, and acknowledging to the world that they were all wrong in moving him and treating him as they have; which will be equivalent to giving 'Little Mac' the command of the Republican vote in November. This, of course, won't do. All say that even if McClellan should agree to it he could not expect any thing but ten times more treatment than he has ever had before just as soon as the election is over, or perhaps immediately upon the triumph of the country, to a y nothing of his own, make the acceptance of any such proposition as Mr. Blair's absurd, preposterous, and I might say criminal."

"The above facts of the working of matters behind the scenes may fully explain the visit of Mr. Blair, and his interview with McClellan. I have upon as good authority as though Mr. Blair had written them out or intimated me in person."

DECLINE IN COTTON GOODS.—There has been a decline of from ten to fifteen per cent in the price of cotton goods as compared with the quotations of a month and six weeks ago.—*Boston Traveller.*

THE MARYLAND CONVENTION AND ITS WORK.

We have already, in more ways than one, called the attention of our readers to the illegal assumption of power exercised by the Maryland Convention for the purpose of securing the adoption of the new Constitution recently framed by it, and ordered to be submitted to only a portion of the people for their ratification or rejection. As such usurpation cannot be perpetrated in one State without injury to the cause of constitutional justice in every State of the Union, we recur to the topic again for the purpose of placing in a clear light some of the fundamental principles of free government infringed by the anomalous proceedings of the majority of the Convention.

It is known that the Convention, instead of providing for the popular submission of their work, according to the statutes which regulate the elective franchise under the existing Constitution of Maryland, has assumed the right to alter and abolish those regulations, and to substitute for them certain regulations which form a part of the projected Constitution—an instrument as yet wholly without any binding authority, and which is professedly submitted to the people for the purpose of testing their wish whether it ever shall have any binding authority on the people. But, by an anomaly as revolutionary in practice as it is absurd in theory, the Convention antedates the submission of their work to the popular vote so far as to assume that a part of the new Constitution is already the fundamental law of the State, overriding the existing Constitution, and displacing the existing regulations in the matter of the elective franchise. This is done in the first place, by imposing restrictions on the right of suffrage which are not authorized by the present Constitution and laws of the State; and, secondly, by extending that right to others, (soldiers in the field,) without any power to do so under the present Constitution and laws of the State. Though the members of the Convention were bound by their oaths to support the existing Constitution in the act of framing a new one for the people, they have assumed in this respect a right to alter and modify its provisions according to their own notions.

The existing Constitution secures to every citizen of Maryland the right to vote in the district where he resides. It says he "shall be entitled to vote." And the Legislature of the State has passed certain regulations, which, so far as they are in conformity with the Constitution, are the only rules by which the judges of the election can suffer themselves to be guided in any election held under the present Constitution. This statement is so axiomatic that it does not need any demonstration. Nobody will contest its truth. If it needed any affirmation it could be abundantly found in the recent history of Maryland. We will briefly re-trace it, not for the benefit of intelligent readers, but for the confusion of those who have undertaken to trample on the most primary principles of popular government as regulated by constitutions and laws.

While Gen. Dix was in command of the Military Department within which Maryland was then embraced, he received a request from the inspectors of the election at New Windsor, in Carroll county, asking him to issue a proclamation prescribing to voters as a condition of exercising the elective franchise that they should take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States. There certainly could be no objection to the imposition of such an oath, if prescribed by competent authority—but what did Gen. Dix reply? We cite from his answer to the superserviceable inspectors as follows:

"Headquarters Department of Pennsylvania, Baltimore, (Md.) November 1, 1861. 'GENTLEMEN: I have received your letter of the 29th ultimo, asking me to issue a proclamation authorizing you to administer to all persons of doubtful loyalty who offer their votes at the approaching election, an oath to support the Constitution of the United States. If I had the power I would do so cheerfully so, for so one who is sworn to the Government ought to be allowed to vote. But the Constitution and laws of Maryland provide for the exercise of the elective franchise by regulations with which I have no right to interfere.'"

Gen. Schenck, the successor of Gen. Dix, was not restrained by any such scruples. He assumed a right to impose on the people of Maryland a test oath as a qualification preliminary to the exercise of the elective franchise, and issued an order under date of October 27, 1862, directing "all protest marshals and other military officers commanding in Maryland to support the judges of elections on the 4th of November, 1863, in requiring an oath of allegiance to the United States as the test of citizenship of any one whose vote may be challenged on the ground that he is not loyal, or does not admit his allegiance to the United States," which oath was in the following form and terms:

"I do solemnly swear that I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States against all enemies, whether domestic or foreign; that I hereby pledge my allegiance, faith, and loyalty to the same, any ordinance, resolution, or law of any State Convention or State Legislature to the contrary notwithstanding; that I will at all times yield a hearty and willing obedience to the laws of the United States, and will not, either directly or indirectly, do any act in hostility to the same, either by taking up arms against them, or aiding, abetting, or countenancing those in arms against them; that, without permission from the lawful authority, I will have no communication, direct or indirect, with the States in insurrection against the United States; or with either of them, or with any person or persons within said insurrectionary States; and that I will in all things regard myself as a good and loyal citizen of the United States. This I do in good faith, with full determination, pledge, and purpose to keep this my solemn obligation and without any mental reservation or evasion whatsoever."

This oath, it will be seen, was entirely prospective in its operation and effect. It did not undertake to disfranchise any body for his former acts, still less for his former opinions, yet, being prescribed without legitimate authority under the Constitution and laws of Maryland, Gov. Bradford very properly issued a proclamation to the judges of election forbidding them to take any notice of Gen. Schenck's "order," and in an address "to the People of Maryland, and more especially to the judges of election," he instructed the latter as follows:

"I need not, I am sure, remind them of the terms of the oath they are required to take before entering upon their duties, and according to which they swear 'to permit all persons to vote who shall offer to poll at the election, &c., who in their judgment shall, according to the directions of the Constitution and laws, be entitled to poll at the same election, and not permit any person to poll at the same election who is not in their judgment qualified to vote as aforesaid.'"

"It is the duty of the judges of election alone, found upon the provisions of the Constitution and the laws of the State, that must determine the right to vote of any person offering himself for that purpose. I trust and believe that they will form that judgment and discharge their duty as their conscientious convictions of its requirements under the solemn obligations they assume shall dictate, undisturbed by an order to protect marshals to report them to headquarters."

It is in the presence of these principles and

precedents that we are prepared to appreciate the illegal and unconstitutional assumption of the late Convention, when it not only prescribes an oath which, as the condition of suffrage in Maryland, is unknown to the existing Constitution and laws, but when that oath is of a nature and quality open to the gravest exceptions on grounds of reason and right. Not only is an oath prescribed by the Convention, which had no right to prescribe any oath, but the oath itself is made retroactive in its operation for the purpose of limiting the right of suffrage in a way as unreasonable as it is illegal. The test oath prescribed by the Convention is as follows:

"I do swear or affirm that I am a citizen of the United States, that I have never given aid, countenance, or support to those in armed hostility to the United States, that I have never expressed a desire for the triumph of said enemies over the arms of the United States, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States and support the Constitution and laws thereof as the supreme law of the land, any law or ordinance of any State to the contrary notwithstanding; that I will in all respects demean myself as a loyal citizen of the United States; that I make this oath or affirmation without any reservation or evasion, and believe it to be binding on me."

In the election to be had on the "adoption or rejection" of the Constitution, it is ordered that the vote shall be by ballot, and each ballot shall describe thereon the words "For the Constitution" or "Against the Constitution," as the voter may elect, and it shall be conducted in all respects as the general elections of the State are now conducted, except that the judges of election shall administer to every person offering to vote the oath or affirmation above-mentioned, and should any person offering to vote refuse or decline to take said oath, "he shall not be permitted to vote at such election, but the taking of such oath or affirmation shall not be deemed conclusive evidence of the right of such person to vote." And in order to make it impossible for the judges of election or the Governor of the State to execute the existing laws according to their oaths of office, the Convention further ordered that—

"It shall be the duty of the return judges of Baltimore, and of the several counties of the State, having counted the votes given for or against the adoption of this constitution, to certify the result thereof in the manner now prescribed by law, accompanied with a special statement that every person who has voted has taken the oath or affirmation prescribed by this constitution; and the Governor, upon receiving such report, and ascertaining the accuracy thereof, shall, by his proclamation, make known the same, and if a majority of the votes cast shall be for the adoption of this Constitution it shall go into effect on the first day of November, eighteen hundred and sixty-four."

"And the Governor shall exclude from count the votes of any county or city the return judges of which shall fail to certify in the returns, as prescribed by this schedule, that all persons who have voted have taken the oath prescribed to be taken, unless the Governor shall be satisfied that such oath was actually administered; and that the failure to make the certificate has been from inadvertence or mistake."

By this arrangement it will be seen that the Governor and judges of elections are made parties to the violation of their sworn duties as prescribed by the existing Constitution and laws of Maryland. If the judges shall perform their sworn duties, as interpreted to them by Gov. Bradford in his protest against the assumption of Gen. Schenck, they will thereby only promote the object of the men who devised this scheme, for votes so taken and returned according to the existing Constitution and laws of Maryland would be cast out. If the judges shall submit to the assumption of this Convention, (as they were warned not to do by Gov. Bradford in the case of Gen. Schenck,) they will violate their oath of office as judges bound to obey the existing Constitution and laws of the State. Such is the dilemma in which the judges of election and the Governor himself have been placed by this artifice.

And as it was foreseen by the dominant majority of the Convention that a Constitution thus fastened on the necks of the people, in violation of public law and of private right, was a Constitution liable to be declared null and void by the Judiciary of the State, they further provided that every person holding any office of trust or profit under the late Constitution, or under any law of the State, and who shall be continued in office under the new Constitution, or under any law of the State, shall, within thirty days after this Constitution shall have gone into effect, take and subscribe an oath or affirmation to support the new Constitution, and if any such person shall fail to take said oath his office shall *ipso facto* be vacant. Under this regulation the Judges of the State, within thirty days after the adoption of the new Constitution, and therefore before any question can be raised respecting the measures taken to procure its adoption, will be either sworn to support the instrument or their places will be vacated.

Now, we ask the candid reader whether any good cause can be subserved by such practices as these? Does the cause of constitutional liberty require the perversion of the plainest and most fundamental principles of constitutional justice? Does the cause of freedom demand the violation equally of private and of public right? If all *ex post facto* laws are odious and unjust, what shall be said of an *ex post facto* regulation which applies not to past deeds, or even words, but to the self-confessed thoughts of any and every citizen in Maryland? The citizen is subjected to disfranchisement not only for the opinions he may now hold, but for those which he at any time has held in the past, near or distant, and which he may have since disavowed and changed. An opinion, a passing thought or sentiment, such as, on the 19th of April, 1861, was freely expressed by many who now boast of their unconditional loyalty, and have been rewarded accordingly, will forever disfranchise and disqualify them, unless a pardon should be vouchsafed by a two-thirds vote of some future Legislature.

Under this prescription of the Convention, men for example, like the editors of the Baltimore American cannot vote for the new Constitution without committing perjury; for it is known that that journal in the critical days which followed the uprising of Baltimore against the authority of the Government took sides with the insurgent authorities and population of the city. It said on the 20th of April, 1861:

"It is no longer a time to discuss, but to act so as to direct them. We have, through our constituted authorities declared that the Northern troops shall not be passed through our city, and that declaration must now be supported with determination, energy, and unanimity. There must be preparation, organization, and good counsel. To prevent the passage of troops they should be met beyond the limits of the city by such an organized force as will make the prohibition effectual. We must keep the war away from our homes if possible. The facts stated elsewhere show what measures have already been taken to secure these ends."

Since the power of the National Government has been firmly established in Maryland, there is no journal which has more strongly proved its "loy-

alty" than the Baltimore American, and yet, for having in April, 1861, given "aid, countenance, and support to those in armed hostility to the United States," its editors must now submit to be disfranchised by the very Constitution whose adoption they urge in their columns.

We have recurred to this subject not because we have any objection to any particular provision of the projected Constitution. With our well-known ideas on the subject of slavery, no reader will suspect us of any unwillingness to see constitutional measures taken for the abolition of slavery by the people of any State. Believing that the institution in its best estate is provisional and transitory, we hail every step which looks to its peaceful and beneficent extinction. But we are of those who believe that a good thing cannot be properly done in a bad way—that justice does not take tribute from injustice, right from wrong, or truth from error.

History is full of examples in which arbitrary power has sought to commend itself to popular favor by showing that it intends to substitute the principles of popular liberty for oligarchic and oppressive institutions. Thus James II. endeavored to break through the restraints of the British Constitution, or perhaps ultimately to establish the Catholic religion in England, by proclaiming liberty of conscience for all, against the established Church. Austria at one time urged measures apparently liberal for the peasants against the Gallian nobles, and in such cases, as has been well said by Dr. Lieber in reflecting on this device of usurpers, "Governments are sure to find numerous persons that do not look beyond the single measure, nor to the means by which it is carried out; yet the legality and constitutionality of these means are of great and frequently of greater importance than the measure itself. Even historians," he adds, "are frequently captivated by the apparently liberal character of a single measure, forgetting that the dikes of an institutional Government once being broken through, the whole country may soon be flooded by an irresistible tide of arbitrary power."

Against all such seductive influences the intelligent patriot is therefore called to be on his guard, and to stand up firmly for the right, whether regard he had to ends or to means, and never directly or indirectly to give his sanction to the odious doctrine that good ends sanctify unrighteous means.

WATCHWORDS FOR PATRIOTS.

Selected from Gen. McClellan's Writings.

The true issue for which we are fighting is the preservation of the Union and upholding the laws of the General Government.—*Instructions to Gen. Burnside, Jan. 7, 1862.*

We are fighting solely for the integrity of the Union, to uphold the power of our National Government, and to restore to the nation the blessings of peace and good order.—*Instructions to Gen. Halleck, November 11, 1861.*

You will please constantly to bear in mind the present issue for which we are fighting; that issue is the preservation of the Union and the restoration of full authority of the General Government over all portions of our territory.—*Instructions to Gen. Bull, November 7, 1861.*

We shall most readily suppress this rebellion and restore the authority of the Government by religiously respecting the constitutional rights of all.—*Instructions to Gen. Bull, November 7, 1861.*

Be careful so to treat the unarmed inhabitants as to contract, not widen, the breach existing between us and the rebels.—*Instructions to Gen. Bull, November 12, 1861.*

I have always found that it is the tendency of subordinates to make vexatious arrests on mere suspicion.—*Instructions to Gen. Bull, November 12, 1861.*

Say as little as possible about politics or the negro.—*Instructions to Gen. Burnside, January 7, 1862.*

The unity of the nation, the preservation of our institutions, are so dear to me that I have willingly sacrificed my private happiness with the single object of doing my duty to my country.—*Letter to Secretary Cameron, October, 1861.*

Whatever the determination of the Government may be, I will do the best I can with the Army of the Potomac, and will share its fate, whatever may be the task imposed upon me.—*Letter to Secretary Cameron, October, 1861.*

Neither confiscation of property, political executions of persons, territorial organization of States, nor forcible abolition of slavery, should be contemplated for a moment.—*Letter to President Lincoln, July 7, 1862.*

In prosecuting this war, all private property and unarmed persons should be strictly protected, subject to the necessity of military operations.—*Letter to the President, July 7, 1862.*

Military arrests should not be tolerated, except in places where active hostilities exist; and oaths, not required by enactments constitutionally made, should be neither demanded nor received.—*Letter to the President, July 7, 1862.*

A declaration of radical views, especially upon slavery, will rapidly disintegrate our present armies.—*Letter to the President, July 7, 1862.*

If it is not deemed best to entrust me with the command even of my own army, I simply ask to share their fate on the field of battle.—*Despatch to General Halleck, August 30, 1862.*

By pursuing the political course I have always advised it is possible to bring about a permanent restoration of the Union—a reunion by which the rights of both sections shall be preserved, and by which both parties shall preserve their self-respect, while they respect each other.—*Gen. McClellan's Report.*

In the arrangement and conduct of campaigns the direction should be left to professional soldiers.—*Gen. McClellan's Report.*

I am devoutly grateful to God that my last campaign was crowned with a victory which saved the nation from the greatest peril it had then undergone.—*Gen. McClellan's Report.*

At such a time as this, and in such a struggle, political partisanship should be merged in a true and brave patriotism, which thinks only of the good of the whole country.—*Gen. McClellan's West Point Oration.*

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS!

From the Baltimore American of Saturday.

Major Gen. Wallace, commanding this Department, yesterday suppressed the publication of a paper called the Evening Post. The following is a copy of the order:

HEADQUARTERS MIDDLE DEPARTMENT, Eighth Army Corps, September 30, 1864.

EDITORS OF EVENING POST: As the arrest means of preventing your office being made the subject of violence, you will discontinue the publication of your paper, the Evening Post.

By order of Major Gen. WALLACE:

OLIVER MATTHEWS, Capt. and A. A. G.

A merchant in Boston, named Conant, who failed in 1861 for \$75,000, paid off his creditors last Saturday, both principal and interest.

There is no truth in the report that Minister Adams is about to retire from his diplomatic position in London.

A BIBLICAL INQUIRY.

It may be within the memory of some of our readers that a week or two ago we offered some reflections on certain "views" put forth by the Boston Recorder, professedly a religious paper, in warning against the "danger" (to which it believes the American people are exposed "from selfish desires for peace") of being "too ready to take the Divine prerogative of forgiveness into our own hands, as if we were more merciful than God; and pardon those dreadful offenders whom He in mercy to posterity has delivered to us to punish and destroy." In support of this comfortable theory of civil duty the Recorder cited, as a "lesson which American Christians should not forget at such a crisis as this," the example of Saul, who, having been commanded by the voice of the Lord, speaking through Samuel, the prophet, to "go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass," had been "rejected from being king over Israel," because he took Agag, the king of the Amalekites, alive, instead of killing him, and because he allowed the soldiers of the Jewish army to "spare the best of the sheep and oxen," under the pretence of reserving them for "sacrifice unto the Lord," instead of destroying them utterly, according to the literal terms of the commission he had received from the Almighty.

We ventured very deferentially to intimate to the editors of the Recorder, that, as this terrible decree in the case of Amalek came directly from Heaven and was supernaturally communicated to the anointed interpreters of the Divine counsels—as without this direct mandate from the Judge of all the earth no such war of utter extermination would have been known as an imperative duty—it was to be presumed that the Boston Recorder was equally inspired with Samuel the prophet when it thus undertook to utter its admonitions to the Government and people of the United States against the great sin and wickedness of daring to "take the divine prerogative of forgiveness into our hands, as if we were more merciful than God." And we added the expression of our hope that it would condescend to inform us at whose hands it received the prophetic consecration in virtue of which it thus assumed a right to "deal damnation round the land," as "without such divine authority its language must seem to pious minds little better than blasphemy."

In its weekly number of Friday last the Recorder takes us with attempting "a ferocious assault" on its theory of religious duty at this crisis, but expresses the opinion that our assault "fails of all force" because we have wholly mistaken its intent and its language. We should be very glad, for the sake of the Recorder, to think so, though we should exceedingly regret, for our own sake, that we had been so unfortunate as not properly to apprehend its intent or interpret its language. But, on either supposition, we take pleasure in placing before our readers the explanation which our religious contemporaries gives of its Scripture precedents. After reciting a portion of the language it had used, it says:

"Again we ask, were not the cases of Saul and Josiah intended to have any influence upon us and upon rulers in these last times? Were they not recorded as warnings against certain dangers, though not as examples for our literal and blind imitation? Are we, upon pain of being called 'bloody-minded,' and of being accused of arrogating to ourselves 'prophetic consecration' to make no use of Old Testament examples, of which the Apostle says: 'Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and that we should not desire to be like unto them in those things wherein they were disobedient, and wherein the wrath of God was kindled against them?'"

If the respected editors of the Recorder will recur to the observations on which they aimed at with so much sensibility they will find that we attempted to lay no restriction on their citation of Old Testament examples, though we expressed some curiosity to know by what internal illumination they were able to decide that only examples of a particular class were appropriate to our present situation. To this effect we wrote:

"As the Recorder says this example of Josiah is, equally with the case of Saul, a lesson which American Christians should not neglect at such a crisis as this, we beg respectfully to ask when and where it received the spirit and power of Eliab, in virtue of which it assumes to pronounce that this precedent is appropriate to our times and land? For we presume that the Recorder is sufficiently familiar with their Bibles to know that on another occasion, when the Syrians, while devastating Palestine, were completely delivered into the hands of the King of Israel, and when the King was anxious to smite them, the prophet answered, 'that shalt not smite them,' and commanded to 'set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.' And it is written that the King of Israel 'prepared great provision for them; and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them, and they went to their master.' The hands of Syria, 'said the sacred chronicler, 'came no more to the land of Israel.' Will the Recorder be good enough to inform us by what superior illumination it has come to know that this Old Testament precedent (in which the prophet, it would seem, lent some countenance to the 'divine attribute of forgiveness' which was exercised by men) is not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, or for instruction in righteousness at the present time?"

We regret that on these points the Recorder vouchsafes us no information whatever.

As our sole object in referring to the observations of the Recorder was to put in an humble plea for one of the Divine attributes which our contemporary thinks it would be a great sin and wickedness for American Christians to imitate, we beg to refer the editors of the Recorder to another Old Testament precedent which they seem to have overlooked. It is recorded in the 28th chapter of the Second Book of Chronicles, and is as follows. (We quote from the 8th to the 10th verses, inclusive.) "And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, sons, and daughters, and took away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria. "But a prophet of the Lord was there, whose name was Oded; and he went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and you have slain them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven. "And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you; but are there any with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?"

Now, we humbly submit to the better judgment of the editors of the Recorder that without any such internal illumination as they may possess, it strikes us that there are some persons, calling themselves Christians, who might very profitably take a lesson from this page in the Old Testament records. The sins of the South, like those of ancient Judah, have justly provoked the anger of the Almighty, but we venture to intimate to the Recorder that there is some danger lest, while conceiving ourselves the instruments of heaven to execute the Divine decrees on a guilty race, we may become transmuted into the agents of our own selfish and revengeful passions—slaying the victims of the law "in a rage that

shall reach up to heaven?" And at a time when so many inculcate the duty of "subjugating" the Southern people, contrary to the express declaration and pledge of the National Legislature as made in the beginning of the war, would it not be timely for some prophet to arise in the spirit and power of Oded, and cry aloud in the streets, "are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?" We venture to express the opinion that the steadfast patriot who is ever on guard against the evil passions which would corrupt his patriotism into "rage," is a man whose loyalty will last longer and go further than that of the malignant philanthropist who is afraid of being "too ready to take the Divine prerogative of forgiveness in his own hands."

On another point of our criticism the Recorder says:

"Again, the Intelligence, in drawing its nice distinctions, accuses us of advocating the indiscriminate and cruel slaughter of all the inhabitants of the South, because we said that God in his mercy to posterity has delivered to us these dreadful criminals to punish and destroy. Does the Intelligence then affirm that all the inhabitants of the South belong to the number of 'these dreadful criminals'? We only said that God had delivered the dreadful criminals to us to punish and destroy. No man in his senses could suppose us to think that all, or very many at the South, were 'these dreadful criminals,' but all would see that we spoke of the leaders and inveterate abettors of the rebellion."

The Recorder having cited the example of Saul in the case of Amalek as "a lesson which American Christians should not neglect at such a crisis as this," and as the guilt of Saul consisted in not utterly exterminating that devoted people, it occurred to us that our contemporary's precepts might possibly be as comprehensive as its illustrative examples. And on what principle, we ask, does the Recorder assume the right, after having cited the case of Saul, to limit the application of that example to "the leaders and inveterate abettors of the rebellion"? Is not our contemporary, by thus weakening the force of its own chosen illustration, in some danger of repeating the impiety of Saul who recoiled from the literal fulfillment of the Divine decrees?

As the Recorder espouses the cause of Mr. Lincoln against the candidacy of Gen. McClellan, and, while awarding to the latter just praise for "courage and Christian principle," regrets that he did not wholly renounce the Chicago nomination, we would respectfully invite the attention of its editors to such portions of the Hebrew chronicles as show the intimate connexion between the character of the Jewish monarch at any given time and the blessing of Heaven. And if there be any "lesson" in such historical testimonies for the instruction and admonition of American Christians "in the present crisis," perhaps it will apprise us of the considerations in virtue of which it rejects the candidacy of Gen. McClellan (who is reputed to be an humble Christian, as well by practice as profession) in favor of Mr. Lincoln, who, whatever may be the amiable traits of his personal character, makes no pretensions, we believe, to a practical experience of Christianity. But, even if the Recorder may think that in modern times there is no use for Christianity in the Presidential chair, it should not, we humbly conceive, undertake to throw the entire weight of the Old Testament against the candidacy of Gen. McClellan, who, we take it, is supported by many persons quite as intelligent and conscientious as the editors of the Boston Journal; and such persons, we may add, are not likely to be deterred from his support by the vaticinations of any prophets who sufficiently show by their one-sided speech that, like their prototypes in the days of Jeremiah, they "prophecy after the decoit of their own hearts."

On the whole, we hope the Recorder, after reflection, will perceive that it has attempted matters too high for it. And we think it will admit that the editors of religious journals, in favoring one political party at the expense of another, are in some "danger" of "handling the word of God deceitfully" when they flippantly press its awful sanctions into the service of their own preconceived notions of policy. The alabaster box filled with the ointment of precious spikenard may be piously broken in homage to the Master, but when it reeks with the odors of political prejudice and the fumes of human passion we doubt whether it affords an acceptable savor. We read in the Apocalypse of "vials of wrath," but they are held in the hands of angels, not of men. We read also of the "golden vessels, full of odors, which are the prayers of saints," not the curses of saints. The thunderbolts of the Almighty are too heavy for men to lift, much less to wield with grace and skill. Even among the heathen it was considered presumptuous to mimic the thunders of Jupiter, and to this day Salomonic lives in the old classic mythology to point a moral against the greater temerity of those who think by the mutterings of their own sectional and political passions to simulate the fulminations of Jehovah.

Demens! qui nimbus et non imitabile fulmen, Jure et corripit pulvis simulatque equorum.

THE GEORGIA MILITIA.

The proclamation of Governor Brown, which we published a week or two ago, withdrawing the militia of the State of Georgia from the army of Gen. Hood, does not meet with the approval of the newspapers, some of which, at least, are ridiculing the Governor for its promulgation. The Chattanooga Rebel (now published at Griffin, Georgia), says:

"We once heard a drunken soldier shout, 'What is freedom without liberty, and what is liberty without independence?' Brown says, what is independence without scorn, and how is scorn to be saved without the militia?"

And again: "We have heard of men 'sparing their bacon by getting out of a fight,' but Governor Brown has called his militia from the front to save their scorn. This flank movement on Scornham is certainly a 'sweetener.'"

In another place, "John Hopper" (Capt. Roberts, one of the editors), gets off the following: